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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000914

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STATE FOR AF/W, INL/AAE, INL/C  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/14/2019  
TAGS: PGOV KCRM KCOR NI  
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: REMOVAL OF EFCC DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

ABUJA 00000914 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Lisa Piascik for reasons 1.4 (b & d)

1.(C) INLOff met with United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) IT Advisor Alain Nkoyock (strictly protect) on May 6 and 13 and Country Representative Dagmar Thomas (strictly protect) May 7 and 8 respectively regarding on the removal of Tunde Ogunsakin, Director of Operations of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). According to Nkoyock, EFCC Chairman Farida Waziri was looking for any opportunity to remove the Director of Operations and used news reports alleging that he had paid a law student at the University of Abuja to take his law school examinations for him to make her case.

¶2. (C) Nkoyock informed INLOff that Chairman Waziri summoned Ogunsakin and asked him to resign. After he refused, she then went to GON Attorney General (AG) Michael Aondoakaa, who disagreed vehemently with her. According to Nkoyock, Waziri and Aondoakaa went to President Umara Yar'Adua to settle their dispute, but the President refused to intervene and told them to come to mutual agreement. When that effort proved unsuccessful, Waziri contacted the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Mike Okiro to request that Ogunsakin (who was a seconded police officer) be redeployed from the EFCC back to the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) Headquarters in Abuja.

¶3. (C) According to Nkoyock, Ogunsakin had previously served at the NPF's Special Fraud Unit in Lagos under Chairman Waziri in Lagos and had built a reputation for extortion from suspects, which he had allegedly continued in his previous job as Director of Operations of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and later while at the EFCC. In addition, Nkoyock noted that Ogunshakin had also been very close to disgraced former IGP Tafa Balogun, whom the EFCC convicted for corruption under its previous Chairman Nuhu Ribadu. Nkoyock added that Ogunshakin is also very close to Okiro, who reportedly has a predilection for corruption.

¶4. (C) According to Nkoyock, Aondoakaa, Okiro, and Balogun orchestrated Ogunsakin's arrival at the EFCC as Director of Operations before Waziri's confirmation. Nkoyock underscored that Waziri played no part in Ogunsakin's selection and that the UNODC and the EFCC's other development partners, such as the European Commission, questioned his selection as he had been very ineffective in his role at the ICPC, where only 15 cases of corruption were successfully prosecuted over its eight years of existence. Nkoyock suggested that Ogunsakin may have been selected in order to impede progress on cases and protect certain high profile suspects in exchange for bribes. (Note: In the past year under Waziri, UNODC statistics at Nkoyock's disposal indicate that the EFCC has only 50 convictions with 6995 pending cases. End Note.) Nkoyock stated that the EFCC Chair has been fed up with international scrutiny of the agency's performance and has recently made a concerted effort to move forward on cases but has been blocked by Aondoakaa; Nkoyock added that the AG and others hoped to establish an independent line of authority and were actively undermining Waziri in order to replace her with Ogunsakin. He also noted that no one in the EFCC was disappointed to see Ogunsakin go.

¶5. (C) Nkoyock confirms that Chairman Waziri has the desire to proceed with cases but has been frustrated to the point of exasperation by Aondoakaa. Nkoyock added that Ogunsakin's removal was Waziri's first effort to establish independence from the AG's influence. The question, Nkoyock raised, is whether she will survive the fight against Aondoakaa. According to Nkoyock, chances are that she may not as Aondoakaa was the one, who originally brought her in. According to Nkoyock, the EFCC Chair appears to have only one ally, EFCC Commission Secretary Mr. Emmanuel Akomaye, who is

ABUJA 00000914 002.2 OF 002

a political survivor and has been able to stay in his position since the beginning of the EFCC. But Akomaye has personally indicated to INLOff that he has major disagreements with Waziri; he has been advocating greater transparency and cooperation with the International Community and has encouraged her to pursue prosecutions. According to Thomas, the UNODC and EC are planning to &infiltrate8 the EFCC with its advisors while it is in a weakened state, and take the reins of investigations similar to their successful work with the IT projects. (Note: According to Thomas on May 7, the EFCC has balked at the idea of the proposed advisors but said they would provide a response soon to UNODC. (Endnote.)

¶6. COMMENT: (C) Waziri's dispute with Aondoakaa over Ogunsakin is the most pronounced example of their growing feud to date; it is likely that Waziri and Aondoakaa will continue their battle for control over the EFCC. It is unclear who will replace Ogunsakin permanently, but without a dedicated Director of Operations, cases will continue to languish. The bright side, however, is the removal of an ineffective Director of Operations. END COMMENT.

¶7. (U) This cable was coordinated with Consulate Lagos and cleared with LEGATT.  
SANDERS